THE

Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

Medical Supplement

‘चिकित्सितात्पुण्यतमं न किञ्चिदपि शुश्रुमः’। ‘बिभेत्यल्पश्रुताद्वेदो मामयं प्रहरिष्यति’

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We understand that the fourth session of the Dravida Vaidya Sammelan will be held this year at Kanyur in the Udumalpet Taluk, Coimbatore District on Tuesday the 7th February and the following days. A strong and influential Reception Committee has been formed with M. R. Ry. N. Ananthanarayana Sastrial Avergal, B.A., L.T., Headmaster of the local Secondary School as Chairman. It is proposed to open an Ayurvedic Dispensary on the last day of the Sammelan and Brahmasri Periaswamy Aiyer Avergal of Kolumam, has kindly consented to preside over the opening function.

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It is announced that a special feature of this Sammelan will be that it will be purely a scientific assemblage whose session will be devoted to the discussion of scientific subjects and the means to improve and popularise the system No resolutions of a political or quasi-political character will be dealt with at the sammelan. This is a change in the right direction and we congratulate the organisers on their present move.

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It is proposed to open the Amaravati Ayurvedic Pharmacy and dispensary on the occasion of the sammelan and the opening function will be presided over by Brahmasri K. Venkatakrishna Iyer avergal, Mirasdar of Kanyur, and president the Kanyur Hindu High School and member Kolumam and Palni Devasthanam Committees. It is a matter for congratulation that the organisers of the conference were able to select the right man. We can confidently assure that the success of the cause of ayurveda is assured in his hands. The dispensary is a long-felt need in and about that locality. There is no such one in the Coimbatore district within a radius of some several miles round. The dispensary, it is expected, will be of great use for those poor thousands who suffer from insufficient medical help and will prove to be a model one. If similar dispensaries are opened in every district or taluk at least much of the hardship would be removed thereby and we wish the public in the other district would take a lesson form their brethren in Kanyur. The District and Taluk Boards would do well and endeavour to run Ayurvedic to spare a few thousands of rupees for this purpose dispensaries in their jurisdiction as they could at a much cheaper cost than the allopathic ones.

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The organisers are also contemplating, we are informed, to arrange for an exhibition, during the Conference week, of vegetable and other drug, both dry and fresh, bazzar drugs and prepared medicines, and books etc. The idea is a very good one and if they try to make it materialise it will enhance the success of the Conference and the cause. This kind of exhibition ought always to be an adjunct of such Conferences.

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It will be remembered that the action of the British Medical Council in the matter of recognising Indian Medical degrees formed the subject of animadversion at the September session of the Indian Legislative Assembly. We now see that the British Medical Council has responded to the representations of the Secretary of State and the Government of India, by suspending its 'ultimatum' in regard to the acceptance of Indian medical qualifications for registration in the United Kingdom until a further investigation into the conditions of midwifery training in the Indian medical colleges has been made. They propose to send out Dr, Norman Walker for this purpose. Dr. Walker, who will probably leave England at an early date, is the direct representative for Scotland on the General Medical Council and has had a distinguished career, and is 59 years of age.

* * *

"Sing yourself better" may become a doctor's prescription in the future if the profession adopts the theories of M. Frossart, of the Sorbonne, as reported in a recent number of the *Medical World*. At the Academy of Sciences, Paris, on July 5th, his method and its results were described. As a former children's doctor, M. Frossart had noticed that singing not only had a great effect on the general health and development of children by making them breathe deeply, but it seemed to have an inexplicable effect in soothing their nerves. Later, when treating nervous patients, M. Frossart recommended to them that they sing, and the results, it i declared, have been remarkable. All sorts of nervou ailments have been treated, such as insomnia, heart lung and stomach troubles. M Frossart declares that singing, which entails deep breathing, has the effect of regularizing the functioning of the sympathetic nerves. His cures for various troubles took several weeks under phonotherapeutic treatment, singing "doses" being taken at frequent intervals.

Ayurveda and the Calcutta University Commission.

The Thridoshas are the fundamental basis upon which the science of Ayurveda is built and they have been explained as best as possible by the ancients. Just as the three Gunas (Satva, Rajas and Tamas) (सत्व, रजस, तमस,) permeate the whole of the metaphysical world of the Hindus, so the three Doshas superseded them in the medical world. The ancients had a peculiar way of reducing all diversities to a simplicity in all branches of their sciences whether physical, religious or otherwise. A knowledge of the various branches of Hindu sciences and their peculiar technicalities alone would help a correct understanding of the principles of the three Doshas in Ayurveda.

Unlike the various micro, and even ultra-micro organisms which are assumed by the modern medical world as the fundamentals though they fail to satisfy in very many cases, the theory of the three Doshas is infallible and stands true for all time and therefore is universal. As a fundamental, the three Dosha theory stands on a more satisfactory basis than the sero-therapy theory. With a complete and comprehensive system of its own Ayurveda has a right to live as a distinctive one side by side with the other systems, in the same way as the homeopathic or biochemic systems do side by side with the allopathic one. It is unfair to think that because Ayurveda is in the opinion of some, defective and has to adopt, assimilate or adjust itself to the times, by supplementing those defective parts from other systems, it should gradually disappear.

In this connection we have to call attention to the remarks of the Calcutta University Commission about Ayurveda. "There is an obvious and promising desire at the present moment among the numerous adherents of these (Indigenous) systems for closer touch. They will be able to make available for the practitioners of Western medicine the traditional knowledge which is of real value and will reject, as Western medicine continually rejects, those theories which are mere survivals and cannot stand the test of experiments. The distinction between Indian and Western systems of medicine will then disappear." It is necessary to point out at the very outset that no two distinct systems can or will disappear from the field because the one adopts from the other certain knowledge which is not to be found in the former. There are various systems existing, now in the Western world, side by side with the allopathic system, but varying in principles and procedure while having close touch with modern scientific methods. It is a fact, in spite of that, that these systems are considered distinctively separate, and recognised by the profession, and the state as highly scientific. Why then should the indigenous systems alone disappear. Homeopathic and Biochemic sytems owe their origin to the west and must therefore exist as a separate system while it is not so with the Indigenous ones. They are but eastern.

The observations of the Commission, it is regretted, have been narrow and partial. It is made on the assumed basis of an unqualified superiority for the Western system and especially of the allopathic one and an inferiority for anything eastern. The observation is one sided and therefore prejudiced.

In the first place, the indigenous systems have nothing to take in the form of principles from other systems. What really has to be done is that the indigenous practitioners should pay more attention and interest themselves in the revival of their systems. It is in this respect in practising the art that the numerous adherents of these (Indigenous) systems show their obvious and promising desire for closer touch with modern scientific method. It is not, it must be borne in mind, in respect of the system itself.

The next suggestion that "in time, no doubt, they will be able to make available for the practitioners of western medicine the traditional knowledge which is of real value and will reject as western medicine continually rejects, these theories, which are mere survivals and cannot stand the test of experiments," is prompted with a motive to see the indigenous systems extinct. It seems the commission has confused the three Dosha theory of the Ayurveda with the old exploded humoural theory of the Greeks. It is necessary to warn our readers here that, though the three Doshas of the Ayurveda are sometimes called by the term humours, the two have no affinity between them. The two are altogether difffrent. That the Commission meant the humoural theory of the Greeks will be plain from their statement beginning with "which are mere survivals.' It has not recognised the indigenous systems as distinctly separate ones. Hence, as a compromise it suggested the extinction of the indigenous systems after amalgamation or incorporation, into the other system of that "knowledge which is of real value" and thus make it "available for the practitioners of western medicine." It is a pity that the commission had nothing to say of western knowledge being made available for the eastern physicians. What the commission means by this, is that the Ayurvedists should, after disclosing to the western physicians all knowledge of any value, cease to exist as a separate entity.

The case of western medicine is quite different. It is still in the making. It is in its experimental stage. It is in its infancy. It must therefore reject all that do not satisfy practical experiment until it is enabled to enunciate a general theory from the result of practical experience. It is submerged now in diversities in every direction and it has to emerge from that diversity into simplicity. The ideal, further, between the west and the east is quite different. To the West, progress means constant change while it is not so to the East. To the latter progress is not in the changing of principles but in the results obtained from the application of those principles which have been tested and found correct and accepted as universal. Hence it is that the West has been obliged to reject continually, what was once found to be satisfactory.

As an illustration of this, the sero-therapy theory, the latest of the innumerable theories set in currency by the West, may be cited. It was, for some time, considered as the most satisfying principle, in the medical circle. It has now begun to loose confidence and many eminent scientists in the West doubt now, of its soundness as a theory. To quote one of many such authorities, Dr. W. H. Hanmer, Medical officer of health, London, begins by satarising the confusion introduced by the bacteriologists, when they begin to divide up the various sequelae of Influenza as separate diseases due each to some newly discovered Germ. Dr. Hanmer, quoting Sydenham's description of the new fever of 1685, said,—"all this repeated itself in February of 1915, but the bacteriologists could not see the wood because of the trees and hence referred each particular symptom, complex as it presented itself to its supposed appropriate causal organism.

It was impossible, therefore, avoid surmising, that Sydenham, if he was back here among us would laugh when he was told that the influenza-like cases of 1915 outbreak were due to Pfeiffer's bacillus and the sore throats were due to the micrococcus cattar-

rhalis, and certain other conditions were due to pneumococi, and streptococci and others to meningococi, and yet others to paramenigococi. He would surely declare that the germs which the bacteriologists were demonstrating were nothing more than associated organisms or secondary invaders." (H. Message. Vol. VII. p. 106).

This then is the difference between the East and West. This is a vital point which no real Ayurvedic man could overlook. This question now is a conflict of culture, of two unequal systems. The mingling of the one with the other will not therefore be beneficial to either of them or at least to the Ayurveda. By coming into contact with each other the West may be a gainer while the East will become extinct gradually. This is exactly what is conveyed by the observation of the Calcutta University Commission. Well wishers of the indigenous systems of medicine would better consider deep before they give expression to their decision on the above question of the questionaire circulated by the committee on the Indigenous systems of medicine in this presidency.

Dosha Sangraha.

(Extracted from the 'Hindi' of Dr. Baba Sahib Paramjpey of Yeotmal. C. P.)

The moderns have with the help of innumerable apparatus of high sensitivity and minuteness, explained many a truths which are beyond common comprehension, relating to the study of physical and allied subject. And their literature on the nature and composition of the animal food and the functional activities of the system are day after day swelling.

The Physiology of digestion and the process of building up of the system from the food taken in are matters which every Vaidya will be in the know. Briefly stated the food we take in, while undergoing various chemical changes transforms into the various tissues and cells, or Dhatus in the process of assimilation.

The process of digestion in the several organs, the circulation of the Blood, the assimilation of the nourishing substances in the food, by the cells and the building of the tissues, these and various other phenomena that take place in the body could be identified in terms of modern Physiology, in the following manner, viz., anaholism, the activity of the cells and kataholism respectively. These three functional actions, which are going on without any interruption day and night in the body are in the terms of the modern technicality, collectively called the metabolism, the metabolic process.

This has been very clearly and lucidly explained in our ancient works in no unmistakable terms by words दोषधातु मला मूलं meaning that the doshas, dhatus and malas are the pillars upon which the human structure is built up. From the six Rasas the *three dhatus* are generated (doshas); from them, the seven Dhatus or (the cells), and from the Dhatus the malas or the excretions are given out. Their characteristics are explained as below—

By Doshas:—Those substances which are endowed with exceptional properties of a controlling and regulating nature—and therefore active—are called the doshas.

Dhatus:—Those solid but inert matter that go to form the various cells in a moving body.

Mala:—The dead matter in a living body that are eliminated from it every day.

Thus in brief we can classify the three substances dosha, dhatu and mala.

Then the six rasas, supply the elements from which the three Dhatus are produced. This process is very ably demonstrated which best satisfies reason and highly scientific. Though they are not elaborately treated in our texts we can find, even from the concise and brief description given of them, that they are explained purely on a scientific basis. In the same way we can find that the restrictions as to dietery and regimen are treated, though concisely, well and based on this principle.

The subject of this present short note is this:—viz., whether we could identify the three Doshas—Vata, Pitta and Kapha—mentioned in our texts, in terms of modern scientific texts, if so what they are? We shall say that according to modern science the term Vata which comprehends all the primary functional activities of sympathetic and central nervous systems, could be identified as the Electrolytes, while *Pitta* (which comprehends all those functional activities that go by the name of the Thermo-Genisis principle) are called the *Ferments* and *kapha* (which comprehends all the phenomena that are produced by the Thermo-Taxis principle as the *Collaids*). Thus the three doshas of the ancients Rishis could be rendered and identified in modern terms.

It is a matter for highest admiration that the ancients were able to enunciate such a sound, perfect and scientific theory at a pre-historic date, while the rest of the world were immersed in barbarism. This testifies to their keen observation, practical experience, patient thinking and calm judgment even at such an early date.

The Active Principle in Medicinal Drugs—X.

By Eliyurkar G. SUBRAHMANYA SARMA.

For according to Ayurveda the effects are produced, in some cases, by the drugs themselves, in some by its rasa, and its vipaka. while in some other cases the virya produces the result. Says, Susruta in his treatise thus:—

तद्द्रव्यमात्मना किंचित्किंचिद्वीर्येण सेवितम् ।
किंचिद्रसविपाकाभ्यां दोषं हन्ति करोति वा ॥

[सु सूत्र. ४०. १४.]

The properties of a drug are inseparable from each other is a fact none can deny. That is why synthetical preparations become necessarily inferior to the natural ones. A synthetical plant, manufactured from a labaratory may present an appearance of a natural one but cannot be expected to possess the same properties as the natural one. The separation of the properties of a drug from its base renders the drug impotent. The vitality of it is thereby deprived. The two are therefore co-existant. Therefore the application of the active principle alone when separated from its drug and administered into the system does not seem to satisfy the purpose for which it is used. The presence of it in the drug helps no doubt much in the performance of its functions along with the other compounds when the drug is administered into the system as a medicine.

As an illustration of the above statement we can show one or two cases where the drug, its Rasa, Virya, Vipaka and Prabhava all have got their own mission to perform in the system. Khadira (खदिर) or Acacia Catechu, effectively acts against leprosy, the drug working by itself irrespective of its properties by virtue of its composition in nature (*i.e.* the presence of the five elements.) A drug works in the system and acts against the disease by virtue of its Virya—whether it may be considered to be two or eight—as in the case of the Big Five roots महापञ्चमूल. The Big five roots consist of Bilva (बिल्व) Ægle marmelos, (2) Agnimuntha (अग्निमन्थ) Premva Spinosa, (3) Syonaka. (श्योनाकः) Oroxylum Indieum (4) Patala (पाटल) Stereospermum Suaveolens (5) Kashmarya

(काश्मर्य) Gmelina Arborea. These Five roots, constituting, the mahapanchamula (महापञ्चमूल) though of a kashaya Rasa with Tikta as a secondary Rasa, is well recommended against Vatic derangements by virtue of its ushna Virya (उष्णवीर्य). As an example of a drug producing good results by virtue of its Rasa, Guduchi is mentioned. This drug otherwise known in English as Tinospora Cordifolia. (गुडूची) though possesses ushna-virya (उष्णवीर्य) acts against all pitta derangements by virtue of its Tikta-rasa or bitter taste. Similarly Sunthi or dried ginger शुण्ठी Zinglier Officinale though possesses a pungent taste or katuka rasa कटुरस conquers Vata by virtue of its madhura मधुर Vipaka.

Thus it is clearly shown that every one of them, the drug, its Rasa, Virya and Vipaka, has got its own functions to do in the system not to speak of its conjoint actions. This therefore clearly suggests that the use of a drug as a whole alone is beneficial in medicine and the separation of its active principle from the drug deprives it of one of its most necessary and vital properties as a medicinal drug. It was therefore said to be co-existant as the drug cannot exist away from its properties, and vice versa in the same way as a Jiva cannot exist without its Sarira. The two are related to each other as the base and the structure and therefore interdependant. For Susruta says

जन्म तु द्रव्य रसयोरन्योऽन्यापेक्षिकं स्मृतम् ।
अन्योऽन्यापेक्षिकं जन्म यथा स्यात् देहदेहिनोः ॥

The presence of the Rasa or the active principle alone gives the drug its true existence. When once it is clutched from its home, the house is made empty generally the shrub, a rose, will be a waste without its flowers. The beauty of it will vanish and the shrub will be made barren. The flower when plucked from its home presents a very awkward spectacle and loses its taste. So also when an active principle is removed from a drug, the drug is made barren and the Rasa itself loses its vitality as the Anurasa or the Secondary compounds will also be separated from each other thereby rendering them each helpless of the other. The decomposition of a drug into its various compounds therefore, by analytical processes may serve for ornamental purposes apart from its utility in industrial enterprises and can serve to present to the world at large, our extremely high advancement and ability in practical experiments in the field of Chemistry.

We wish to point out here that our readers should not mistake the statement, that a drug, its Rasa, Virya and Vipaka all have got distinctive functions to perform in the sytem individually. Though every one of them has got certain special properties irrespective of the rest. The use in medicine is only con-joint and not independent. Ayurveda never suggests the use of a drug minus its rasa or virya. It is only intended to show the importance of the use of the drug as a whole, though the properties of all of them is well recognised in medicine. It is here that the two systems differ. The West, lays much stress upon the active principle of the drug alone while the east, lays an equall stress upon the drug as a whole, though it recognises in it the existence of various compounds or rasas as also the important functions they play in medicine. They have not been blind to the active principle in the drug. Otherwise the mention of rasa and anurasa etc., will find no place in their treatises. This alone is sufficient proof that they had an up to date knowledge of the various branches of sciences that are supplementary to the science of medicine.

Swarna - - Rathnakaram

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Prepared by Pandit C. T. ARUMUGAM PILLAY, Ayurvedic Doctor, and the member of the Committee on the indigenous systems of medicine (the Ayurvedic and Unani) and son of

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